

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01  
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FPC-01 H-01 INR-07  
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06  
OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-05 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /106 W  
-----077072 180940Z /16

P 180818Z OCT 77

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5774

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 10188

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EFIN, IV

SUBJECT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF OIL FIND

1. ESSO EXPLORATION OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET BOIGNY THAT THE DEPOSIT OF OIL THEY DISCOVERED OFF THE COAST AT GRAND BASSAM AT A DEPTH OF 200 FEET IS COMMERCIALY EXPLOITABLE. AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THIS EFFECT IS TO BE MADE BEFORE THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 18 (HOUPHOUET'S BIRTHDAY). IT IS LIKELY THAT THE GIST OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS, ALTHOUGH ESSO WOULD HAVE PREFERRED NOT TO GO PUBLIC AT THIS TIME.

2. ESSO OFFICIALS HAVE STRESSED TO THE EMBASSY THAT ALTHOUGH THE CRUDE IS OF HIGH QUALITY, THE FIELD IS VERY SMALL. ESSO PLANS TO BEGIN DESIGN OF A PLATFORM WHICH SHOULD BE IN PRODUCTION BY 1979 OR 1980.

3. MEANWHILE THE PHILLIPS-LED CONSORTIUM IS HOLDING ITS ANNUAL REVIEW OF ITS EXPLORATION EFFORTS. IT STRUCK GAS IN THE ONLY HOLE IT HAS DRILLED TO DATE. THE CONSORTIUM HAS BEEN INVITED TO MEET WITH HOUPHOUET ON OCTOBER 19, AT WHICH TIME HE WILL LIKELY URGE THEM TO STEP UP THEIR EXPLORATION EFFORTS. THE LOCAL PHILLIPS REPRESENTATIVE IS PLEASED AS HE BELIEVES THE ESSO ANNOUNCEMENT COUPLED WITH THE MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT WILL HELP HIM CONVINCE  
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THE CONSORTIUM TO APPROVE HIS PLAN TO DRILL TWO MORE HOLES  
IN 1978.  
STEARNS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
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